



STATE OF INDIANA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Next Indiana Bookshelf celebrates Hoosier Bicentennial through reading and conversation

Books encourage discussion about the present and future of Indiana; Deadline to apply is Nov. 23

INDIANAPOLIS (Oct. 15, 2015)—Libraries, schools and community organizations seeking to celebrate the Indiana's bicentennial in 2016 through reading and conversation are encouraged to apply for a new resource called the Next Indiana Bookshelf. Created by The Indiana Center for the Book and Indiana Humanities, 55 groups will receive the Bookshelf sets, which include a copy of each of the 13 titles designed to encourage thinking and discussion about the present and future of Indiana.

The Next Indiana Bookshelf includes fiction, nonfiction, essays and poetry, as well as titles appropriate for adults, young adults and children. Each book has a strong connection to Indiana, either set in Indiana and/or written by a Hoosier author. To apply to receive a free set of these books, visit www.indianahumanities.org/next-indiana-bookshelf. The deadline for applications is Nov. 23.

"These books are great discussion starters because they explore the dynamic forces shaping Hoosier communities today," said Keira Amstutz, president and CEO of Indiana Humanities. "Returning veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan, our growing ethnic and religious diversity, changes in how we use our land, and the complicated yet vital connections between our rural small towns and our rapidly growing suburban and urban areas – these are all topics explored in the Bookshelf."

Additionally, every school and library in Indiana will receive a poster of "The Indiana Chant," written for the bicentennial by South Bend, Ind.-based children's author April Pulley Sayre. Teachers and librarians are encouraged to use the chant for readings and performances in the weeks and months leading up to Statehood Day on Dec. 11, 2016.

"This program was designed to inspire Hoosiers to come together to talk about common themes about our future," said Jacob Speer, state librarian and director of the Indiana State Library. "We hope that schools, libraries and other organizations apply for free sets of these books and we encourage everyone to join us in reading these wonderful titles."

The 13 titles are:

Earth Works: Selected Essays by Scott Russell Sanders raises big questions about how we are connected to each other and the earth, how our Midwestern roots shape who we are, and what it means to live a good life.

The Essential Etheridge Knight by Etheridge Knight gathers the works of Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award nominee Knight, who first started writing poetry as a prisoner at the Indiana State Prison in 1968.

Food For Thought: An Indiana Harvest by David Hoppe, photos by Kristin Hess captures and explores this exciting moment of change and possibility in Indiana food and agriculture.

The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf by Mohja Kahf tells the story of Syrian immigrant Khadra growing up in Indianapolis in the 1970s, questioning what it means to be “Muslim” and “American,” and follows her conflicted return to Indiana as an adult.

The Indiana Chant by April Pulley Sayre celebrates the nature and culture of the Hoosier State in a lively chant form that will appeal to kids and grown-ups alike!

Invincible, Indiana by Nate Dunlevy incisively captures life in small-town Indiana, where ambitious protagonist Dale Cooper coaches high school basketball and finds that both team and townsfolk alike are all too content to settle for mediocrity.

Kurt Vonnegut: Letters by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., edited by Dan Wakefield collects more than 60 years’ worth of the irascible author’s observations and recollections about growing up “a native Middle-Westerner.”

Paper Towns by John Green is equal parts literary mystery, classic road-trip fiction and coming-of-age story as teenager Quentin explores the real and imagined landscapes of suburbia in his quest to discover the secrets of long-time crush Margo.

Raintree County by Ross Lockridge, Jr. lyrically and timelessly both celebrates and critiques the American dream by telling the story of one day in the life of Hoosier schoolteacher and poet John Shawnessy.

Running Out of Time by Margaret Peterson Haddix surprises readers of all ages as 13-year-old Jessie discovers the truth behind her seemingly simple life in 1840 village Clifton, Indiana and races to save the lives of her friends and family.

Sailing the Inland Sea: On Writing, Literature, and Land by Susan Neville asks us to consider the Hoosier landscape and the many writers who have shaped our appreciation of it.

Soldier Girls: The Battles of Three Women at Home and at War by Helen Thorpe traces the stories of three Indiana National Guardswomen during 12 years of military service, revealing the sacrifice and fortitude and of today’s new generation of veterans.

What This River Keeps by Greg Schwipps tells a familiar Hoosier story—an elderly couple fears the loss of their bottomland farm to eminent domain, their son struggles with duty to his family’s land and legacy—and, in so doing, asks us to consider how we balance public good and private interests.

The Next Indiana Bookshelf is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services, administered by the Indiana State Library.

About Indiana Humanities

Indiana Humanities connects people, opens minds and enriches lives by creating and facilitating programs that encourage Hoosiers to think, read and talk. Learn more at www.indianahumanities.org.

About Indiana Center for the Book

The Indiana Center for the Book is a program of the Indiana State Library and an affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. It promotes interest in reading, writing, literacy, libraries, and Indiana's literary heritage by sponsoring events and serving as an information resource at the state and local level. Learn more at <http://www.in.gov/library/icb.htm>.

About Indiana State Library

The Indiana State Library serves Indiana residents with a variety of needs including; genealogy, Indiana history, preservation, rare books and manuscripts, reference and government services, Talking Books and Braille library, as well as the State Data Center. The State Library also leads and supports the greater Indiana library community and is a magnificent limestone building to visit. Learn more at: <http://www.in.gov/library/index.htm>

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